OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

LIFE

OF

CICERO.

Μετὰ μέντοι θεοὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπων τὸ πᾶν γενος τὸ ἀεὶ ἐπιγιγνόμενον ἀιδεῖδε οὐ γὰρ ἐν σκότῳ ὑμᾶς οἱ θεοὶ ἀποκρύπτονται, ἀλλ' ἐμφανῆ πᾶσιν ἀνάγκη ἀεὶ ζῆν τὰ ὑμέτερα ἔργα.

ΞΕΝΟΦΩΝ.

Lord Lyttelton.

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To the Right Honourable

ARTHUR ONSLOW,

Speaker of the

House *of* Commons.

SIR,

THE Honour I do my ſelf of addreſſing theſe Remarks to You, is a Proof how Confident I am in the Partiality of your Friendſhip; if they have

any other Claim to your Regard it is only from a Spirit of Liberty, which, where-ever it appears, is always sure of your Favour and Protection. The Subject of them, which is the Life of Cicero, *must be doubly Interesting to you, as he was the most excellent Orator of all Antiquity, and bore the most eminent Character in the* Roman *Senate, while it remain'd Free,*

and

and was worthy of that Name.

I am with the moſt perfect Reſpect, and higheſt Senſe of your Favours to me,

SIR,

Your moſt oblig'd,

and moſt obedient

humble Servant.

DEDICATION.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

Life of *Cicero.*

AMONG all the celebrated Characters in the *Roman Hiſtory*, there are none more worthy our attention, than thoſe Great Men who were at the Head of the Republick when ſhe was arrived at her higheſt Degree of Power and Glory, and by a natural conſequence of exceſſive Proſperity was fallen into thoſe Vices and Corruptions,

ruptions, which ſoon after produced a Change of Government, and brought her into an infamous Slavery. This Revolution was either haſten'd or delay'd according as they who had the Management of Affairs were more or leſs infected with the general Depravity: Some there were who preſerved themſelves quite untainted; who gallantly ſtood in the Breach, and ſtruggled hard for Liberty: Such were *Marcus Cato*, *Quintus Hortenſius*, *Quintus Catulus*, and *Marcus Brutus*, whoſe Virtues were the more valuable to their Country, becauſe they were exerted at a juncture when ſhe found herſelf moſt in need of their Aſſiſtance: With theſe *Cicero* has generally been placed, and if we may take his own word, *Rome* had not a more unſpotted Patriot to boaſt of than himſelf: But I doubt when we look ſtrictly into his Conduct, we ſhall often find it very different from theirs who really deſerve that Name; and it will appear even from the Teſtimony of his own

own Letters, in which he ſpoke more naturally, and with leſs vanity than he does in his Orations, that his publick Character was far from being Perfect; that he acted upon many occaſions more like an ambitious Orator than a philoſophical Republican; that his Virtues were blended with many Weakneſſes and pernicious Failings; and that notwithſtanding his exalted Notions of Integrity, he ſometimes yielded to the Corruption of the Age, and ſacrificed the Welfare of his Country to his private Intereſts and Paſſions. What makes him the leſs excuſable is, that none ever underſtood the Rules of Virtue, or ſaw the Beauty of it more than he: His Writings are the nobleſt Leſſons of publick Honeſty, Diſintereſtedneſs, and the Love of Liberty, that are to be found in all Antiquity: and it is the Excellent, and almoſt Divine Spirit which appears in thoſe Books, that has made the majority of Readers conclude the Author of them

to have been in his own Practice, what he takes ſo much pains to recommend, and inculcates with ſuch force of Eloquence. And to do him Right, in many parts of his Adminiſtration he was the Patriot he deſcribes: the Commonwealth had great Obligations to him; no leſs than its Preſervation at one Criſis; but there wanted a Steadineſs and Uniformity in his Conduct, which alone could entitle him to the Reputation he was ſo deſirous of obtaining, and that has been given him rather by the Partiality of learned Men, than from the Suffrage of hiſtorical Juſtice.

I ſhall endeavour in the following Obſervations to ſet his Actions in their proper Light, and without aggravating or ſoft'ning any thing, conſider them as they were directed to the Advantage or Prejudice of his Country; in doing which, I ſhall dwell only upon ſuch Circumſtances as are important to his Character, paſſing by a great number of other Facts which have no relation to my Deſign. The

The firſt Cauſe of Moment that he undertook was the Defence of *Roſcius Amerinus*, in which he gain'd great Honour by his oppoſition to *Sylla* who was the Proſecutor, and whoſe Power had frighten'd every body elſe from appearing in his Behalf: Such a Spirit in a young Man at his firſt entrance into Publick Buſineſs was admir'd by all the World, and ſeem'd to promiſe ſomething very extraordinary: But though the Danger of offending the Tyrant could not deter him from pleading for *Roſcius*, yet he thought it not prudent to expoſe himſelf to his Reſentment afterwards; but left *Rome* and retir'd into *Greece* under pretence of travelling for his Health. He there apply'd himſelf to the Study of Eloquence, and having the Advantage of the beſt Maſters in the World, he made ſuch Improvements in it, that when he came to the Bar upon his return to *Rome*, he ſoon eclipſed all his Competitors, even *Hortenſius* himſelf, who could not ſee without uneaſineſs

the Superiority he was gaining over him, though they afterwards became very good Friends; The Conformity of their Sentiments upon Publick Buſineſs, and the Intereſts of the Commonwealth having united them notwithſtanding their Emulation. This great Ability in Speaking could not fail to raiſe him very high in a Government where every thing was diſpoſed of by the Favour of the People; and for the firſt Proof of their good Will towards him, he was ſent to *Sicily* in the Office of Quæſtor, where he behaved himſelf with ſo much Juſtice, Integrity, and Moderation, that his Reputation as a Magiſtrate was not inferior to that which he had obtain'd before as an Orator. To ingratiate himſelf ſtill further with the *Sicilians*, he engaged in the Proſecution of *Verres*, who during his Prætorſhip in their Iſland, had drawn upon himſelf an univerſal Hatred by his Rapaciouſneſs, Inſolence, and other Crimes which were too often committed

ted with Impunity by the *Roman* Governors: And *Verres* himſelf, infamous as he was, did not want the Countenance and Protection of ſome of the moſt conſiderable Men in *Rome*, who endeavour'd to ſhelter him from Juſtice for a Reaſon obvious enough, becauſe they were unwilling any Enquiry ſhould be made into Offences of that publick Nature, in the Guilt of which ſo many of their Friends, and perhaps they themſelves were too much involved. But the Eloquence and Credit of *Cicero* condemn'd *Verres* in ſpite of their oppoſition, and the *Sicilians* were ſo pleaſed with the Service he had done them upon that occaſion, that they put themſelves wholly under his Protection, and continued their Eſteem and Affection to the End of his Life.

Soon after his ſucceſs in this Affair, which recommended him extreamly to the *Roman* People, who were always glad to ſee Magiſtrates proſecuted for Male-adminiſtration, he was made *Edile*;

Edile; and having gone through that Office with a deſerv'd Applauſe, he was unanimouſly choſen Prætor. As that Dignity was the Second in the Commonwealth, the Poſſeſſion of it inſpir'd him with higher Thoughts and more aſpiring Hopes than he had entertain'd before: He then began to take ſuch Meaſures as he judg'd moſt likely to contribute to his Advancement: and as *Pompey* was more capable than any body of aſſiſting him in that Deſign, he ſought all means of gaining him to his Intereſts; and with that view pronounc'd his famous Oration *pro Lege Manilia*, in which he entirely forſook his former Character of a Lover of his Country, and became a principal Inſtrument of Illegal and Arbitrary Power. As the Part that *Cicero* acted in this Affair deſerves a very particular conſideration, I ſhall ſet it in as full a Light as poſſible, the more, becauſe *Plutarch* takes no notice of it, which it is not very eaſy to account for conſidering his uſual Impartiality.

The

The extravagant Affection of the People in committing to *Pompey* the Command of the War againſt the Pirates, had veſted him with ſo exorbitant a Power, that it utterly deſtroy'd the Equality eſſential to a Commonwealth. His Commiſſion gave him an abſolute Authority over the whole length of the *Mediterranean* as far as *Hercules*'s Pillars, and along all the Coaſts of it to the Diſtance of fifty Miles from the Sea: He was impower'd to take what Money he thought fit out of the publick Treaſury without accounting for it, and to raiſe as many Soldiers and Mariners as he judg'd convenient. Beſides this, he had a Liberty of chuſing out of the Body of the Senate, fifteen Perſons to ſerve him as Lieutenants, to whom he aſſign'd their Provinces at his own diſcretion. In vain did the Conſuls, with moſt of the Senators, oppoſe this prodigious Authority, ſo contrary to the Maxims of their Government: Their reſiſtance ſerv'd only to inflame the People, and occaſion'd

occaſion'd them to add to their Decree, that *Pompey* ſhould have Power to fit out five hundred Sail of Ships, to raiſe an Army of an hundred and twenty ſix thouſand Men, and that he ſhould have twenty four Senators and two Quæſtors to obey his Orders.

With this Force he ſoon reduced the Pirates, and his Victory was hardly known at *Rome*, when *Manilius*, one of the Tribunes of the People, to gratify his infatiable Ambition, propoſed the giving him the Government of *Lucullus*, and the Command of that General's Army, then carrying on the War with *Mithridates*, and that he ſhould ſtill retain the whole Extent of that Authority which had been granted him by the former Decree, though the Reaſons for which it had been given were entirely ceas'd. This was nothing leſs than delivering to him all the Forces both by Sea and Land, and making him abſolute Maſter of the *Roman* Empire: What render'd the Favourers of this Decree more in-

excuſable

excuſable was, That they had not the leaſt Pretence of Publick Neceſſity to juſtify the Propoſing it, as they ſeem'd to have had in the Commiſſion they gave him againſt the Pirates, who were at that time very formidable Enemies: But *Lucullus* who commanded in *Aſia*, had overcome *Mithridates* in ſeveral Battles, and was as capable of finiſhing the War as He whom they appointed to be his Succeſſor. Such an exceſſive Power entruſted to one Man, where there was ſo little occaſion for it, appear'd to the Senate an utter Subverſion of the Conſtitution; but ſuch was their Fear of *Pompey*, whoſe Greatneſs was become no leſs terrible than that of *Sylla*, that except *Quintus Catulus* and *Hortenſius* none durſt contradict the Paſſing of it. Theſe two Great Men, one of which was beyond diſpute the ſecond Orator in *Rome*, ſpoke with much Warmth and Force againſt the Decree, endeavouring to perſuade the People of the Unreaſonableneſs and Danger of it; and

perhaps they would have made ſome impreſſion, if *Pompey*'s Faction apprehending the Effect their Orations might have produced, had not ſet up an Abler Speaker than either of them to harangue on their ſide of the Queſtion. *Cicero* mounted *the Roſtrum*, and with an Eloquence worthy of a better Cauſe, moſt artfully reflected on *Lucullus*, whoſe Reputation as well as his Authority, was to be made a Sacrifice to the Envy of *Pompey*; then he proceeded to deſcant upon *Pompey*'s Character, which he ſet off with all the Ornaments of Rhetorick, attributing to him the whole Succeſs not only of the *African*, *Spaniſh*, and Piratick Wars, but even of that againſt the Slaves, the Honour of which was ſolely due to *Craſſus*. Thus by cruelly injuring two of the greateſt Generals that were then in the Commonwealth; by a moſt ſervile Flattery of the Man who was manifeſtly overturning all its Liberties; He brought the People to conſent to the *Manilian Law*, which, had a re-

gard

gard to the Intereſt of his Country been his conſtant Principle, he ought to have oppoſed as violently as he did afterwards the *Agrarian*, or any other Attempt againſt the Safety and Freedom of the State. It is certain that theſe extraordinary Honours confer'd on *Pompey*, as they broke the Ballance of the Republick, ſo they irritated the Ambition of *Cæſar*, and afterwards furniſh'd him with a Pretence of demanding as great a Power for himſelf, and ſeizing it by Force when it was refuſed.

I come now to ſpeak of his Conſulſhip, which really deſerves all the Praiſes that not only the *Greek* and *Roman* Hiſtorians have beſtowed upon it, but even thoſe which he himſelf is ſo laviſh of whenever he has an opportunity to mention it. His oppoſition to the Law propos'd by *Rullus*, which was preſented to the People in a Form they were always eaſy to be caught with, was a Matter of the moſt delicate Nature, and nothing leſs than his conſummate Addreſs in the managing

thoſe Aſſemblies, could poſſibly have hindered its being carried by the artful Contrivers of it: But by ſhewing the People that under the Notion of a popular Decree they were really ſetting up a private Tyranny, from which no Advantage could ariſe to the Poor, for whoſe ſake alone this Law was pretended to be form'd, but the Revenues of the Publick would be diſſipated and its Liberty deſtroy'd; he ſtop'd the execution of their Deſigns, and ſav'd the Commonwealth from the Yoke which was juſt ready to be impos'd upon it. I believe no Affair was ever managed with greater Prudence, nor ever ſo much Skill exerted in any Oration as in thoſe he made upon this occaſion, which are certainly Maſter-pieces in their kind, tho' others of a more pompous Stile are generally more admir'd. His Conduct in *Cataline*'s Conſpiracy is too well known to be repeated here: The Vigilance, Firmneſs, and Activity, with which he diſcover'd and prevented that Deſign, can never be

be too much extoll'd; nor could any thing have depreciated the Services he then did his Country, but his being ſo ſenſible of them himſelf. As to the Charge brought againſt him by his Enemies of having violated the *Porcian Law*, by putting to death the Chief of the Conſpirators without allowing them a Tryal, he was abundantly juſtified in ſo doing by the urgent Neceſſity of Affairs, and by the Order of the Senate, *That he ſhould take care the Republick might receive no detriment.* This Commiſſion veſted him with ſomething like a Dictatorial Power, and the extream Danger of the Commonwealth requir'd it; for the leaſt Delay would have been fatal. But as the People were always jealous of any Stretch of Authority in the Senate, they were more eaſily wrought upon to take Umbrage at this extraordinary Act which *Cicero* himſelf calls in one of his Letters *Invidioſa Potentia.*——After the expiration of his Conſulſhip all Mens Eyes were turn'd upon him, as one who

who they hoped would continue to be the chief Support of thoſe that were affectionate to the Commonwealth. What Engagements he then enter'd into, what Friendſhip he cultivated, what Policy he obſerved, demands a very ſtrict Examination, though this Period of his Life, from the Death of *Catiline* to his Baniſhment by *Clodius*, has been paſs'd lightly over by Hiſtorians; and therefore many parts of it are only to be collected from his private Letters, in which he gives a very particular Account of every Step he took, and of the many Changes both in his Sentiments and Behaviour that happen'd during that remarkable Interval. We ſhall find him ſometimes devoted to *Pompey*, ſometimes at variance with him; ſometimes imploring his Protection, ſometimes deſpiſing his Power; now reſolved to ſtand or fall with the Commonwealth, now making his Terms with its Tyrants; almoſt always Reaſoning differently, and yet frequently Reaſoning better than

he

he could prevail upon himſelf to act. When he was to make an Oration to the People upon quitting the Conſulſhip, the ſecret Enemies of his Adminiſtration declared themſelves, and *Cæſar* who was one of the Prætors, together with *Metullus* and *Beſtia*, two Tribunes, would not ſuffer him to give an Account of his Conduct as was always uſual, but commanded him to abjure his Office, and leave the *Roſtrum*. This they grounded upon his having put to Death ſome *Roman* Citizens without a legal Tryal; and they thought it would be a great Mortification to *Cicero*'s Vanity, to deprive him of ſo fair an opportunity of making his own Panegyrick: But the Readineſs of his Wit found a Way to diſappoint their Malice; for he took the Oath in a new-invented Form, and inſtead of ſwearing that he had acted nothing contrary to the Intereſts of the Republick, he ſwore that he had ſaved the City and the whole State from Ruin. As extraordinary as this Oath

was,

was, all the People took it after him in the ſame Words, and the Affront that his Enemies would have done him fell entirely upon themſelves. The next Day he complain'd of them in the Senate, and prevail'd upon that Order to paſs a Decree, *That no Proſecution ſhould be brought againſt him for what he had executed by virtue of the Power which they had given him.* This drove the Cabal againſt him to propoſe a Law for the calling home *Pompey* with the Army under his command, to ſecure the Liberties of the People againſt the pretended Tyranny of *Cicero*: but by the invincible oppoſition of *Cato* this Project fail'd. However, it made ſuch an Impreſſion upon the Mind of *Cicero*, that he reſolv'd to neglect no Methods of binding *Pompey* more ſtrongly to his Intereſts, who had already very great Obligations to him, as has been ſhewn before. Accordingly when that General was preparing to return to *Rome*, he writ to him, and having complain'd of

his

his want of Friendſhip, in not congratulating him upon what he had done during his abſence for the Service of the State; he compares *Pompey* to the younger *Scipio*, and himſelf to *Lelius*, deſiring that their Union might be as ſtrict as was the famous One between thoſe two great Men. This produc'd an Appearance of Amity towards him, but he himſelf ſuſpected it not to be ſincere, as is evident from his 13th Epiſtle to *Atticus*, in which he ſays of *Pompey*, That indeed he made great Profeſſions of Eſteem and Conſideration for him, and affected openly to ſupport and praiſe him; but it was eaſy enough to ſee he envied him, though he endeavoured to conceal it. *Cicero*'s Vanity makes him call that Envy, which was really Ill-will, for *Pompey* could not be a Friend to any body that had declared himſelf in the Intereſts of the Republick. The Character that *Cicero* gives of him in the ſame Letter, is very different from that of *Scipio*, to whom he had compared him a little before: His

Words are, ſpeaking of his Conduct, *Nihil Come, nihil Simplex, nihil* ἀνοῖς Πολιτικοῖς *Honeſtum, nihil Illuſtre, nihil Forte, nihil Liberum.* And again in the 20th of the ſame Book, *Is vir nihil habet Amplum, nihil Excelſum, nihil non Summiſſum & Populare.* Would one believe, that the Hero of the fine Oration *pro lege Manilia*, and the *Pompey* thus deſcrib'd, was the ſame Man? Had he nothing Great? nothing Elevated? nothing but what was Mean and Vulgar? was there neither Dignity, nor Spirit, nor Freedom, nor Candour, nor Honeſty, nor Good-nature in his whole Behaviour? But to this Perſon, ſuch as he is here repreſented, *Cicero* earneſtly labour'd to recommend himſelf: and he had ſoon after more need than ever of his Protection in the famous Quarrel with *Clodius*, which he entered into more to ſatisfy the ill Humour of his Wife *Terentia*, who was jealous of an Intrigue between him and *Clodia*, than out of any regard to the Ceremonies of the

Bona

Bona Dea. Had he known the Parts and Capacity of *Clodius* as well as he did afterwards when he came to feel them, in all Probability he would not have expoſed himſelf to the Enmity of a Man ſo able to do him miſchief, and with whom he had always lived before in a Degree of Friendſhip: But beſides that he thought his Ruin infallible from the Evidence he brought againſt him, the perpetual Riot and Debauchery in which he paſs'd his time, made him apprehend no great Conſequences from his Reſentment: But he was ſoon convinced, that a Turn to Pleaſure does not always render thoſe that follow it unfit for Buſineſs, eſpecially when they are excited to Action by any violent Paſſion. *Clodius* found means to corrupt his Judges, and was no ſooner acquitted but he turn'd all his Thoughts to the Purſuit of his Revenge upon *Cicero*, and kept him in continual Alarms till he got an opportunity of compaſſing it, which obliged him to court *Pompey* more and more,

though ſuch a Conduct was extreamly inconſiſtent with his Principles of Liberty. As much diſtruſt as he had expreſs'd of that Great Man's Friendſhip in the Letter to *Atticus* I mention'd firſt, he now deceived himſelf into an entire Dependance on it, and moſt of his Letters were fill'd with Boaſts of his good Policy in ſecuring ſuch a powerful Protector againſt *Clodius* and all his Faction. How little Foundation he had for ſo much Confidence, will appear by the Sequel of that Affair. In the mean time there was a Buſineſs brought before the Senate which, as it very much affected one of the main Points of *Cicero*'s Policy, it will be neceſſary to give ſome Account of. It had always been his favourite Syſtem, through the whole Courſe of his Adminiſtration, to ſtrengthen the Power of the Senate by a cloſe Union with the Equeſtrian Order, they making a very conſiderable Body, and carrying a great Weight along with them to which-ever ſide they inclin'd. He

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ſucceeded ſo well in this Deſign, that during the Conſpiracy of *Catiline* they were a conſtant Guard to the Senate, and ready upon all occaſions to ſupport the Reſolutions of that Houſe. This was certainly a very important Service to the Commonwealth, and it was no ſmall Honour to *Cicero* to have been the Author of it: But moſt of this Order being imploy'd in collecting the * Taxes of the Republic, or in Farming of its Revenues, there were grievous Complaints made againſt them from all Parts of the Empire for the frequent Abuſes of their Office, in all which *Cicero* was forc'd to defend them contrary to Truth and Equity, for fear of alienating them from the Senate. But ſoon after the Affair of *Clodius*, *Cato* who did not underſtand thoſe Managements, accuſed the Judges who abſolved him of Corruption, many of which were *Roman* Knights, and obtain'd a Decree againſt them. This was reſented

* Ep. 1. L. 2.

ſented as an Affront upon the whole Body, and *Cicero* to pacify them again, was oblig'd to ſpeak in the Senate againſt the Decree. * But a much worſe Matter that follow'd ſhortly after, involv'd him in a new Trouble upon their Account. Many of them who had farm'd the *Aſian* Revenues of the Cenſor, whoſe Office it was to ſett them, had taken them at too high a Price out of Emulation to go beyond the other Bidders; and afterwards repenting of their Bargain, made a moſt impudent Requeſt to the Senate, that they might be diſcharged of ſo much of their Rents as they thought would burthen them too much. It was impoſſible for *Cato* to be patient under ſuch a Demand: He oppos'd it with all his Might, and on the other ſide *Cicero*, who knew of what Conſequence it was not to diſoblige the Order, ſupported them no leſs vigorouſly: The Diſpute between them laſted a good while, but at length *Cato*, who had Juſtice

* Ep. 1. L. 2.

Juſtice and Reaſon entirely on his Side, got the better, and the Petition was rejected. Experience ſoon ſhew'd how much more uſeful it would have been for the Commonwealth to have follow'd *Cicero*'s Advice. The Knights exaſperated at the Severity of the Senate, abandon'd their Party, and gave themſelves up to *Cæſar*, who knew very well how to turn this Diviſion to his own Advantage. It was the Fault of *Cato* not to ſee that Publick Affairs are incapable of Perfection, and that it is impoſſible to govern a State without ſubmitting Leſſer Intereſts to Greater: Hence it was that with admirable Intentions for the Service of his Country, he ſometimes did a great deal of Miſchief, for want of diſtinguiſhing between what was good in Speculation, and what in Practice. This was ſeldom the Caſe with *Cicero:* when he departed from the Intereſts of the Republick, it was for the moſt part with his Eyes open, and without the Excuſe of Error. During

theſe Wrangles between him and *Cato*, the Triumvirate was ſecretly forming, and *Cæſar*, under the ſpecious Pretence of reconciling *Pompey* and *Craſſus*, was working himſelf into a Share of Power with them which he knew better than they did how to ſupport. *Cicero* perceiv'd it, and takes notice to * *Atticus* of his growing Greatneſs. But as dangerous as this Union was to the Commonwealth, he did not think fit to oppoſe it, or break with *Pompey* upon that account; though he makes the ſtrongeſt Declarations of his Reſolution not to abandon the good Cauſe, but ever to maintain it at all Events. It ſeems he flatter'd himſelf with an unaccountable Chimæra of being able to govern them both, as he tells *Atticus* in the firſt Epiſtle of the ſecond Book. And again in the third of the ſame Book, he informs his Friend that *Cæſar* had aſſured him he would do nothing but by his Advice: Poſſibly *Cæſar* being ſenſible

* Ep. 1. Lib. 2.

ſenſible of his Foible, might have ſooth'd his Vanity in making him believe ſo; but it is much more likely, that his Conduct was owing to other Motives which are mention'd in that Letter, *viz. Reditus in gratiam cum Inimicis, Pax cum Multitudine, Senectutis otium.* Thus he manifeſtly gave up the Care of the Commonwealth to a precarious Safety and ſhameful Eaſe; but he could not help reproaching himſelf for it at the end of the Letter, and acknowledging that this was acting very differently from the virtuous Maxims of his Conſulſhip, and very much beneath his Reputation.

The fifth Letter of the ſecond Book is ſo extraordinary a Confeſſion of his Weakneſs, not to give it a worſe Name, that I am ſurprized how it came to drop from him even to ſo intimate a Friend as *Atticus*. He very ingenuouſly tells him, That if they whom he afterwards calls Tyrants, would have bribed him with the Place

of Augur, they had it in their Power to have gain'd him. *Quo quidem uno (Auguratu ſci.) ego ab Iſtis capi poſſum; vide Levitatem meam.* But being diſappointed in the Object of his Ambition, he reſolves, out of the abundance of his Virtue, to retire from Buſineſs and Philoſophize: accordingly he went into the Country, and in the Letters he wrote from thence, treats both *Clodius* and *Pompey* with great Contempt, and even threatens the laſt with a publick Recantation of all the fine Things he had ſaid of him. While he was abſent *Pompey* married *Cæſar*'s Daughter, upon which *Cicero*, whoſe Penetration ſaw all the Conſequences of this fatal Alliance, return'd to *Rome*, and joining with *Curio* and other Oppoſers of *Cæſar* in the Senate, endeavour'd to obſtruct his Deſigns, though without offending *Pompey*, with whom he ſtill kept up a Shew of Friendſhip. But the Storm which had hung over him ſo long now broke upon

on his Head: *Cæſar* to be reveng'd aſſiſted *Clodius*, and got him to be choſen Tribune of the People. No ſooner was he entred upon this Office, but he openly menaced *Cicero* with a Proſecution for the Death of the Conſpirators. This threw him into one of his uſual Terrors; but *Pompey* flatter'd him with repeated Aſſurances that he would not ſuffer *Clodius* to proceed: At firſt he gave Credit to theſe Promiſes, but finding that the Deſign againſt him ſtill went on, he began to ſuſpect that he was betray'd. His Affairs were in this diſagreeable Poſture, when *Cæſar*, who deſired only to draw him off from giving him Trouble at *Rome*, offer'd to carry him his Lieutenant into *Gaul*, for which Province he was ready to ſet out. *Plutarch* ſays he ſollicited it himſelf, but the Letters to *Atticus* expreſsly affirm that the Propoſal came from *Cæſar*. Be it how it will, there could nothing more advantagious have happen'd to *Cicero* at that time:

The Employment was very honourable, and would have effectually ſecur'd him from the Malice and Power of his Enemies: Being ſenſible of this himſelf, he was inclined to accept of it, and would have gone with *Cæſar*, if *Clodius* perceiving that he was in danger of loſing his Revenge, had not very artfully changed his Conduct, and by affecting to ſeem moderate and void of Rancour, perſuaded People that he had laid aſide his Reſentment, and was even diſpoſed to a Reconciliation if ſought for. *Cicero* was weak enough to be duped by this Behaviour, and refuſed the Lieutenancy of *Cæſar*, who thereupon inſiſted with *Pompey* upon giving him up to the Fury of *Clodius*, and declared in an Aſſembly of the People, that he thought *Cicero* had acted illegally in putting to Death the Accomplices of *Catiline*. *Clodius* puſh'd the Affair ſo vigorouſly, that *Cicero* ſoon found he had undone himſelf in not making uſe of *Cæſar*'s offer. He fell into a

moſt unmanly Dejection, changing his Robe, and walking about the Streets in a ſordid Habit, to move the Compaſſion of the People, while *Clodius* inſulted and reviled him for his want of Spirit. The Senate indeed, and the whole Equeſtrian Order, gave him all the Marks he could deſire of Affection and Concern, but the Faction againſt him was the ſtronger: *Craſſus* was his Enemy upon many Accounts, *Catulus* was dead, *Lucullus* retired from Buſineſs: *Pompey* was his only reſource, and he ſtill counted upon ſome return for the many Services he had done him in the courſe of his Adminiſtration. But it is the juſt Puniſhment of thoſe who make themſelves the Tools of other Men's Ambition, *That whenever the Intereſts of thoſe they ſerve may happen to demand it, they are ſure to be ſacrificed: for no very ambitious Man was ever Grateful any further than it was Uſeful to him to be ſo.* This *Cicero* moſt cruelly experienced, when going

going to *Pompey* to implore his Protection, he to avoid his Importunities or Reproaches, refuſed to ſee him. Upon this, he utterly loſt all Hopes, and abandoning himſelf to the moſt abject Complaints, conſulted with his Friends what he ſhould do to avoid the preſent Danger. Moſt of them adviſed him to go voluntarily into Baniſhment, as the only Means to prevent a Civil War, which Council he reſolved to follow, as moſt conformable to his own Genius and Circumſtances.

In how Spiritleſs and Effeminate a manner he behaved during his Exile, is ſufficiently known to all the World: The Stain that is left upon his Character was too great to be varniſhed over by all the Glory of his Triumphant Return, which he chiefly owed to the Imprudence of *Clodius* in quarrelling with *Pompey*, though the vigorous Proceeding of his Friend *Milo*, and the Firmneſs of the Senate were of no ſmall Service to him. As ſoon

as

as he was re-eſtabliſhed in his former Dignities, he link'd himſelf more cloſely than ever in Friendſhip with *Pompey*, making his Court to *Cæſar* at the ſame time, whom he found it was not ſafe for him to offend. This Complaiſance had the Effect that he propos'd from it; he obtain'd the Place of Augur which he deſired ſo paſſionately, and not long after the Government of *Cilicia*. His Behaviour in the Adminiſtration of this Province would have done him a great deal of Honour, if he could have been content with the Reputation he had acquired of a wiſe and upright Magiſtrate, without aiming at the Glory of a Soldier, to which he was far from having ſo good a Title. *Cato*'s anſwer to the Letter, in which he ſollicits him to get a Triumph decreed him by the Senate, is a very handſome Reproof of his Vanity, and a more gentle One than one would have expected from the Roughneſs of that great Man's Character.

But

But notwithſtanding all the Pains he took to ſoften his denial, *Cicero* was grievouſly offended at it; which ill diſpoſition of his, the Enemies of *Cato*, particularly * *Cæſar*, omitted no Endeavours to confirm. Upon his return to *Rome* he found the Civil War juſt ready to break out between *Him* and *Pompey*: This extreamly embarraſs'd him, for he was very deſirous to be upon good Terms with both, and both equally courted him to their Party. At firſt he attempted to bring them to ſome Agreement, but he ſoon found that Deſign impracticable; for Ambition which had formerly made them Friends, now made them Enemies: Then he labour'd to diſſuade *Pompey* in particular from hazarding a War, by repreſenting to him the inequality of their Forces, and that it was now too late to quarrel with the Man whom he himſelf had made ſo ſtrong: Theſe Arguments, as juſt and reaſonable as they

* V. L. vii. Ep. 1, 2.

they were, had no effect upon *Pompey*, who was infatuated with a vain Conceit of his own Power, and a falſe Confidence which betray'd him to his Ruin. All his Efforts towards preventing a Rupture meeting with no Succeſs, *Cicero* found himſelf in the greateſt Perplexities for which of the two Factions he ſhould declare. On one ſide he ſaw a General without Authority, Troops without Obedience, neglect of all neceſſary Preparation, and a continual Series of Miſtakes; on the other an active Leader, a well diſciplin'd Army, great Courage, and admirable Conduct: whichever got the better, the Commonwealth was almoſt equally ſure of being inſlav'd. That this was the caſe very plainly appears from many Paſſages in his Epiſtles to *Atticus*, where he ſays, That let the Succeſs of the Civil War be what it would, the Conſequence of it would certainly be a Tyrant. I ſhall only cite one which is in the 7th Letter of the 7th

Book, *Depugna, inquis, potius quam Servias: ut quid? ſi victus eris proſcribare, ſi viceris, tamen Servias.* The only difference was, That the Tyranny of *Pompey* would be eſtabliſhed upon the Authority of the Senate, and *Cæſar* choſe rather to build his upon the Favour of the People. Under theſe Difficulties *Cicero* remained ſome time, in a moſt uneaſy ſituation; at laſt he tells *Atticus* the Concluſion of all his Reaſonings in the following Words: * *Quid ergo inquis acturus es? Idem quod Pecudes quæ Depulſæ ſui Generis ſequuntur Greges: Ut Bos Armenta, ſic ego Bonos Viros, aut eos qui dicuntur Boni, ſequar, etiam ſi Ruent.* He reſolves to herd with his own Kind, that is to follow thoſe who had the Reputation of being the Honeſt Party, the Majority of Senators, and the Men whoſe Dignity was moſt eminent in the Commonwealth. But though he had taken this Reſolution,

* L. 7. E. 7.

lution, he delay'd a good while to execute it, from the natural Timidity of his Temper. In the mean time, ſome of his Friends that were in *Cæſar*'s Army and *Cæſar* himſelf, were very earneſt with him to ſtand Neuter at leaſt, if he would not join with them, which Conduct they perſuaded him would be moſt for his Honour, as well as infinitely for his Advantage. But *Pompey* preſs'd him to come immediately to his Camp, and in ſuch a manner as let him ſee, that he reſented the Uncertainty of his Behaviour. This alarm'd him, and he begun to think it neceſſary to declare himſelf according to his firſt Intention, though he every Day ſaw more reaſon to apprehend the ill Succeſs of their Party. But what determin'd him at laſt was the Severity with which *Pompey* threaten'd to proceed againſt all who remain'd Unactive and Neuters in the Quarrel: * *Crudeliter minabitur Otioſis*, ſays

 he

* Ad Familiares, L. 9. E. v. ad Varronem. E. vi. L. 11.

he in a Letter to one of his Friends. And in another to *Atticus* he tells him, That the leaſt he (*Atticus*) would ſuffer if *Pompey* ſhould be victorious, was a Confiſcation of all his Fortune; and that as many as continued in the ſame Neutrality muſt expect to come off no better. He himſelf therefore upon the Report of ſome diſadvantage *Cæſar* lay under in *Spain* (which contrary to the Expectation of his Enemies he ſoon ſurmounted) ſet ſail and joined *Pompey* at his Camp in *Greece*, who receiv'd him coldly, as knowing he came thither very much againſt his Will. He endeavour'd to revenge himſelf by bitter Railleries upon the ill management of their Affairs, and ſo derided the Weakneſs of the Party, that it drew from *Pompey* this ſevere Reproof, *Paſs into* Cæſar's *Camp, and then you will give over Ridiculing us, and begin to Fear us.* *Cicero* ſo far follow'd his Advice, that he withdrew himſelf before the Battle

tle of *Pharſalia*, and immediately after that deciſive Action made his Peace with the Conqueror. From that time to the Death of *Cæſar*, he led a moſt inglorious and diſhonourable Life, courting the Uſurper whom in his Heart he hated, with the moſt abject and ſervile Adulations, entirely forgetting the Dignity of his former Character, and not even hiding the diſgraceful Circumſtances of his preſent ſituation by a prudent and modeſt Retreat, but expoſing them to the Eyes of the Publick, and braving the Cenſures of Mankind. Yet in this unworthy and contemptible Scene of Action, which brought ſuch a Cloud upon his Reputation, one Merit he ſtill preſerved, that in his Flatteries to *Cæſar* he ſhew'd a Regard to the Intereſts of his Friends, and the Safety of thoſe who had faithfully ſerved the Commonwealth. Such a Conduct ſhews there were yet ſome Sparks of Virtue remaining in him; and though it does not attone

for

for the mean Homage which he paid to the Tyrant of his Country, yet it certainly leſſens the Guilt and takes off from the Infamy of his Crime. The Conſpiracy againſt *Cæſar* which was form'd and executed without his Participation, is a plain Proof how low he was then fallen in the Opinion of honeſt Men; for who was ſo fit to have engaged in a Deſign againſt the Life of an Uſurper, as the Deſtroyer of *Catiline* and his Accomplices? from whom could the Republick ſo properly expect her Freedom, as from Him who had before defended it in ſo imminent a Danger? But They who eſpous'd that Cauſe which he had deſerted, ſaw and knew that he had no longer Spirit enough for ſo great an Undertaking; and therefore they contented themſelves with requiring his Approbation afterwards, which they were ſatisfied he would not refuſe them when the Blow was ſtruck; and then indeed, as they expected he would do, he re-

turn'd

turn'd to the Maxims of his former Policy, and his Character in ſome meaſure recover'd its former Luſtre. He entred into the Intereſts of the Conſpirators, and did them all the Service he was able, the particular Inſtances of which it will not be neceſſary to mention here. But when he found that all was going again to Wreck by the Cabals of *Antony* and other Friends of *Cæſar*, when *Brutus* and the other Heads of the Conſpiracy were oblig'd to yield to the Violence of the Conjuncture and abandon *Italy*, he too judg'd it prudent to retire, and took Shipping to go into *Greece*; but meeting with contrary Winds, he was driven back once or twice to ſhore; by which delay, time was given to his Friends in *Rome* to acquaint him with *Antony*'s having made a Decree, for the perpetual Aboliſhment of the Dictatorſhip, which *Sylla* and *Cæſar* had made ſo odious, and ſome other popular Acts, that gave them hopes he would return

turn to his Duty, and no longer hinder the Reſtoration of the Commonwealth. Being thus call'd back by, what he terms himſelf, the general Voice of his Country, and looking upon the Accidents which had delay'd his Paſſage as miraculous Declarations of the Will of Providence to command his Return, he made what haſte he could to *Rome*, where he was received by the whole City with uncommon Honours. But the good Opinion he had conceived of *Antony* did not laſt long: Some harſh Words he ſpoke in the Senate concerning him, occaſion'd a very ſharp Reply, which *Antony* reſenting, loudly threaten'd him in his Oration, and accus'd him as an Accomplice of *Cæſar*'s Murder. *Cicero* from that Moment kept no Meaſures with him, but arming himſelf with all the Thunder of his Eloquence, pour'd forth thoſe terrible Invectives which compell'd the Senate to declare War upon *Antony*, and ſoon after drove him out of *Italy*.

Italy. This was certainly a very great Action, and one of the ſhining Parts of *Cicero*'s Life; but poſſibly he would have done the State more Service in the ſituation it then was, if his Animoſity againſt *Antony* had been leſs Violent, becauſe it precipitated the execution of thoſe Deſigns which ended in the Ruin of the Commonwealth; at leaſt this was the Opinion of *Brutus*, as appears by ſeveral Paſſages in his Letters. But there is another Part of his Conduct which it will be more difficult to know how to juſtify, I mean his committing the Safety of the Republick to an ambitious Boy, who from the near Relation he bore to *Cæſar*, could never be a proper Perſon to defend it in conjunction with his Father's Murderers. At firſt indeed it might look like good Policy, to make uſe of his Credit among the Friends and Soldiers of *Julius Cæſar*, againſt the more formidable Greatneſs of *Mark Antony*; but when he

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afterwards grew ſo Powerful, it was a moſt inconſiderate and fatal Miſtake to continue him any longer in Employment, and put the laſt Stake of Liberty into the Hands of one who had ſo great Temptations to Betray it. It ſeems *Octavius*, unexperienc'd as he was, had diſcover'd the Old Man's weak Side, and by flattering and perſuading him that he would always act ſubſervient to his Authority, had engag'd him to that exceſſive Confidence which his Friends ſaw the Danger of though he did not. *Brutus* in particular, whoſe Eyes were ever open to all that might affect the Commonwealth, made him ſtrong and frequent Inſtances to have a Care of ſetting up one Tyrant while he was pulling down another: But when, without any regard to theſe Remonſtrances, he carried his Servility ſo far as even to ſupplicate *Octavius* for the Lives of *Brutus* and the other Conſpirators, That truly great and free-ſpirited *Roman*

could

could not help venting his Indignation againſt him in * two Letters, one to *Atticus*, and the other to *Cicero* himſelf, which are at the ſame time the nobleſt Monuments of the heroick Virtue of him that wrote them, and the moſt unanſwerable Condemnations of that Conduct which gave occaſion to them. And indeed he had too much Reaſon to ſay, That *Cicero* acted as if he was not ſo ſollicitous about ſecuring the Liberty of his Country, as to chuſe a Maſter who would be favourable to himſelf. But what moſt of all exaſperated *Brutus* was, That in the Exceſs of his Complaiſance for *Octavius*, he had even reflected upon *Caſca* whoſe Cauſe had been eſpouſed by him with ſo much Warmth, and upon whoſe Action he had beſtow'd ſuch high Encomiums, while he had Freedom and Courage to ſpeak his Mind. Of this *Brutus*, whoſe Reputation was ſtrongly linkt to that

* Ep. 16, 17, ad Brutum.

of *Caſca*, moſt grievouſly complains to *Atticus*, and tells him with a noble Contempt, That though he and his Aſſociates, in the generous Deſign of delivering the whole World from Slavery, did not boaſt ſo much of the Ides of *March* as *Cicero* of the * *Nones of December*, yet their Glory was not inferior to his, nor their Characters leſs Sacred. I muſt tranſcribe both the Letters, if I were to repeat all the admirable Reproofs which they contain of *Cicero*'s Baſeneſs and Indiſcretion in ſo meanly courting the Enemy of the Commonwealth, and for having planted and ſupported a Tyranny, whoſe Roots were like to ſtrike deeper, and grow more ſtrongly, than that of *Antony*; which he valued himſelf upon having attempted to deſtroy. All that can be alledged in his Excuſe is, That he believed he ſhould be able to deprive *Octavius* of the Power he had given him, when the

* At which time *Cicero* quaſh'd the Conſpiracy of *Catiline*.

the Intereſt of the State ſhould require it: There are ſome Paſſages in the Hiſtory of thoſe Times, which ſeem to favour this Suppoſition, and even to aſſure us, That he intended doing it, when he was prevented by the ſudden Forming of the Triumvirate. It is ſaid that *Panſa*, who received a mortal Wound at the Battle of *Modena*, declared at his death, to the young *Caſar*, That the Senate only made uſe of him as an Inſtrument of their Vengeance upon *Antony*, and that they were determined to make him the next Sacrifice to the Jealouſy of the Republick. There was alſo an Expreſſion of *Cicero* reported to him, in which by an Equivocation eaſily underſtood, there was intimated a * Deſign to cut him off as ſoon as he had ſerved their Turn; upon which, he openly declared that he would take care to put it out of their

* Laudandum Juvenem Ornandum Tollendum. V. Epiſ. a D. Bruto, Lib. xi. ad Familiares, E. 20.

their Power. If this was the Caſe, it very much takes off from the Ingratitude of *Octavius*, in conſenting to the Death of his Benefactor, ſince ſuch Double-Dealing could hardly deſerve the Name of an Obligation, let the Effects of it be ever ſo advantageous. Upon the whole I am inclined to think, that though his Behaviour in regard to *Cæſar* was productive of infinite Miſchiefs, yet he meant well in it to the Commonwealth, and that the Fault was rather of his Judgment than his Heart: But to whatever Cauſe it is to be aſcribed, he ſuffer'd Death as a Puniſhment for it, and fell himſelf the earlieſt Victim to that Tyranny his Miſmanagement had eſtabliſhed. There was ſomething mean in the Circumſtances that immediately preceded his * Murder, but at the Inſtant of Death itſelf he behaved with Dignity, and ſhew'd a Firmneſs not unworthy of a *Roman*.

In

* See Plutarch.

In his private Character he was very amiable, only ſometimes too much given to Raillery, a Fault which very witty Men are ſeldom wiſe enough to ſhun. I cannot paſs ſo ſevere a Cenſure as ſome have done upon his Grief for the Death of his Daughter *Tullia*, whoſe extraordinary Merit is a ſufficient Anſwer to thoſe who reproach it with the Name of Weakneſs. Great Minds are moſt ſenſible of ſuch Loſſes, and the Sentiments of Humanity and Affection are uſually moſt tender, where in every other reſpect there is the greateſt Strength of Reaſon.

I ſhall cloſe theſe Obſervations with one Remark upon the Works of *Cicero*, that they are a ſtrong Proof how eſſential Freedom is to the Excellency of Writing, particularly in the two moſt manly Kinds of it, Philoſophy and Oratory; ſince after the Loſs of the *Roman* Liberties, they were ſo far from ever being equall'd, that all Attempts which were made to imitate them, ſerv'd only to demonſtrate that the

the Genius and Learning of *Rome* were sunk together with its Constitution. Poetry indeed, and other Parts of Literature which are only proper for Amusement, may possibly flourish under the Smiles of an Arbitrary Prince; but Force and Solidity of Reasoning, or a Sublime and Commanding Eloquence are inconsistent with slavish Restraint, or timorous Dependancy.